

Washington State Dept. of
Community Development

*Stronger Communities
For a Better Washington*



Striking the balance to provide adequate urban area land supply

By Sue Enger

Planning Consultant, Municipal Research and
Services Center of Washington

Establishing urban growth areas is a major step Washington communities will take in managing their growth. Within these UGAs, growth will be encouraged and supported with adequate facilities. Areas outside of the UGAs will be reserved for primarily rural and resource uses such as farms.

Because it places limits on the nature of land uses which will be permitted, many communities are finding it to be a controversial step. Assuring an adequate UGA land supply for industrial, commercial, and residential uses can greatly ease apprehensions about UGA designation.

They will also need a thorough understanding of what land is realistically developable, available, and suitable for the full range of land uses. A careful analysis of land supply—both vacant and redevelopable—is essential to the success of the UGA designation process and the growth management program as a whole.

Local surveys and studies can help communities get a handle on how much land will be available at a given time and over a 20-year span. Recognize, however, that no community can expect to develop perfect information about land supply. There are many variables and unknowns.

The GMA provides a built-in safety factor in requiring that the UGA include a

Drawing an urban growth boundary involves striking a delicate balance. The exact amount of land provided within the UGA will be a key factor in whether a community can successfully accomplish its GMA objectives.

Too much land within the UGA may contribute to urban sprawl and high public services costs for spread out development. With sprawl, less land will be available for resource uses. It can also contribute to the decline of established urban areas.

Too little land for residential uses can push housing costs upward and limit housing choices. An inadequate supply of industrial land can hobble economic development at a time when the economy is center stage.

The GMA requires that counties include sufficient areas and densities to accommodate the county's expected 20-year growth. To determine UGAs, they will first need a clear vision about the nature, type, and density of urban growth in a community.

20-year land supply. The law requires that at least every 10 years, communities must adjust the supply to meet the needs of the next 20 years. In theory, if communities have discounted for lands which aren't suitable, available, or capable of being developed, the supply should be adequate.

Because it is difficult to fully account in advance for these factors, some communities have built in an excess supply of land. For instance, Portland's UGA contained 15.8 percent land area beyond the 20-year projected need. Perhaps the best advice for maintaining the course between too much or too little supply is to monitor development on a regular (every one to three years) basis.



About Growth

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Local governments continue to move forward on GMA work

By Mike McCormick
 Assistant Director, Growth Management

With Gov. Mike Lowry now in office and 54 new legislators at work, DCD is busy presenting information on growth management in the legislative arena.

Using information from the annual report forms returned by cities and counties, we are able to offer specific answers to legislators' questions about growth management progress. For example, about 50 percent of the respondents said they are preparing optional economic development sections for their comprehensive plans.

Thanks to those who have completed the annual report forms. For those with reports yet to be sent in, please complete them as soon as you can.

Legislative debates on extending growth management deadlines, impact fees, water issues, housing issues, local governance, and transportation planning have been lively and spirited.

On the growth management budget, former Gov. Booth Gardner's budget recommended a 40 percent budget cut for operation of the state growth management program. On grants to local governments, it recommended a possible 30 percent cut in grants, a reduction from \$16 million to \$11.4 million.

Gov. Mike Lowry's transition team's draft report, *Voices of Washington*, makes a number of comprehensive recommendations

including that the state fund 50 percent of the cost of local government growth management work. It recommends an appropriation of \$30 million for the state's upcoming two-year budget period to fund DCD growth management activities and one-half of local government costs.

Let us know if you'd like a copy of the growth management recommendations from *Voices of Washington*.

We've received positive comments about our new newsletter format, including articles from the local perspective. Thank you to those who have contributed. We look forward to continuing to receive assistance from people working at the local level. You are where the action is fast-moving and people want to hear directly about your experiences.

This newsletter focuses on adequate land supply. The topic is one that has been controversial and not without some challenge—because it's new and because there's not a lot of experience with it. As one key to local success, adequate land supply is an integral part of a community's future economic development.

We've asked local government officials and the Washington Chapter of the NAIOP (Association for Commercial Real Estate) to give us their views on adequate land supply. I think you'll agree the articles lay out the challenges of adequate land supply and some current thinking on how the challenges can be met.



Public and private leaders share views during DCD's recent "Striking the Balance" workshop. Shown, left to right: Carol Johnson, Sedro-Wooley; Oliver Ojiakor, Clark County; Dick Fryhling, DCD; and Paul Seely, The Boeing Co.

Public and private representatives sort tough land supply questions

When it comes to the question of what lands and how much land is best suited for a community's industrial, commercial, and residential development, there are no simple, once-and-for-all answers.

This was the conclusion reached when about 80 representatives from the public and private sectors met during a recent workshop in Seattle. *Striking the Balance: A Workshop in Providing Adequate Land Supply* was sponsored by the state Department of Community Development's Growth Management Division.

The topic and the meeting were motivated by the state's new Growth Management Act. Planners from counties and cities planning under the GMA are required to provide land capacity sufficient to accommodate at least 20 years of growth as forecasted by the state Office of Financial Management.

The ability to accomplish this task, unprecedented in the region, has challenged local planners and worried many business people.

Richard Weinman, with the planning firm Huckell/Weinman Associates Inc. and a private sector facilitator at the workshop, highlighted the importance of the land supply question: "If planners overestimate available capacity under existing zoning, then officials may unknowingly or unintentionally design their urban growth areas without enough room for growth. Housing prices may then soar. By the same logic, overestimation of commercial and industrial land capacity may end up causing economic activity and jobs to locate in ex-urban areas or even out of state, if the capacity to support growth is not there."

In producing land capacity estimates, planners and local officials must deal with a series of tough questions, any of which can lead to false or misleading conclusions.

King County Senior Planner Michael Quinn, a public sector facilitator at the workshop, explained that "it is very difficult to judge the effects of some of these factors

on land capacity. Sensitive area constraints such as wetlands and steep slopes are particularly hard to estimate without site by site analysis."

In addition, Quinn stated, "Market forces that influence the feasibility of development and redevelopment are extremely difficult to forecast."

The GMA also requires planners to take the capacity of the transportation system into account in their calculations. If roads needed to support growth are not likely to be built within the time horizon of the plan, projects can't be built. Any land capacity provided by zoning in areas without the necessary infrastructure will not be useable during the life of the plan.

Although discussions at the workshop did not reach consensus on specific solutions for the questions raised, there was agreement on the need for improved baseline information and for monitoring land supply and development trends.

"Because uncertainty is an inherent part of land capacity estimation, planners must join together with the private sector to define the data that will be needed to tell us whether our initial estimates and assumptions are working out, whether mid-course corrections will be needed," Quinn said. "Frequent monitoring will be an important element to keep our growth management efforts on track and to ensure that land supply is, in fact, adequate and that growth management plans are flexible and effective. Public and private sector cooperation in this effort is essential."

Clearinghouse update

Due to popular demand for the *Tools That Work* packets, the Growth Management Clearinghouse is expanding the series with seven new planning tools including subdivision regulation, voter approval, and tax increment financing.

For more information and an order form, call 206-543-5168.

Guidebooks on land supply offer valued suggestions

If you're scratching your head over how to get started on the topic of how much residential, commercial, and industrial lands your area will need to provide for new growth, DCD has some guidebooks that will help you.

Guide to Subcounty Population Allocation. Helpful in determining how the 20-year population forecast can be divided between cities and other subareas of the county. Provides details on methods of forecasting.

The Comprehensive Plan's Foundation: A Land Use Inventory Guide. Explains how to conduct a land use inventory.

Issues in Designating Urban Growth Areas, Part I: Providing Adequate Urban Area Land Supply. Focuses on how to analyze vacant land supply and how to match the supply with anticipated growth needs.

The Art and Science of Designating Urban Growth Area, Part II: Some Suggestions for Criteria and Density. Helps determine what is rural and what is urban and how to examine which densities are appropriate for these categories.

Predicting Growth and Change in Your Community: A Guide to Subcounty Forecasting. Demonstrates methods for allocating OFM's population forecast among UGAs.

To request a guidebook or a publications list, call 206-753-2222, SCAN 234-2222.



Michael Quinn, Chair, Growth Management Technical Advisory Group

King County land supply plan includes private sector input

By Michael Quinn

King County Senior Planner and Chair of the Growth Management Division's Technical Advisory Group

Private sector concern regarding the adequacy of current zoning to meet future needs for employment growth was a major impetus for the recent land supply workshop sponsored by DCD.

As a result, King County planners and private sector representatives continue to compare assumptions and methods used for calculating commercial and industrial lands capacity. These discussions have taken numbers generated by public sector planners as a starting point.

"Private sector participation is a crucial part of our process," said Michael Alvine, senior economic development specialist with the King County Planning and Community Development Division. "It provides us with a great reality check on the work we have been doing.

"No group has a better sense of the practical difficulties facing developers," Alvine added. "We need the 'privates' to help us figure out how to make redevelopment and infill opportunities pencil out. Without the incentives and regulations to make infill and redevelopment practical possibilities, we will be hard pressed to make more efficient use of zoned lands within our urban growth area. Our entire strategy might flounder without this help."

In his presentation at the workshop, Alvine used one of the methods in DCD's draft land use element guidebook for comparing the supply and demand for commercial and industrial land uses.

"It's not enough to stop with supply under current zoning," Alvine said. "You have to figure out whether you've got enough (land) to accommodate future demand for business uses."

Cities, counties fund 2/3 of local GMA costs

Cities and counties have covered about two-thirds of their actual local costs to implement the Growth Management Act, according to a recent sample survey by DCD. The sample survey was conducted to better identify GMA implementation costs.

State grants to local governments from DCD have covered the remaining one-third of local GMA costs. The survey also found that:

- All counties hired additional staff for GMA planning. Of cities, 62 percent hired more staff.
- 90 percent of all jurisdictions contracted with one or more consultants to provide GMA assistance.
- Costs to provide public involvement in the GMA process averaged \$21,461 per jurisdiction over a two-year period.

Slide show offers introduction to growth management

A 10-minute slide show, *Growth Management in Washington*, provides information on how communities can use growth management tools to achieve their goals for the future.

To borrow the slide show, call 206-753-2222, SCAN 234-2222.

NAIOP offers land supply views

By Ted Knapp

Past President, Washington Chapter of NAIOP

A recent study conducted by the Washington Chapter of the NAIOP (Association for Commercial Real Estate) reveals that less than a 10-year supply of vacant industrial land exists in the Kent Valley and eastside King County.

The study identifies, parcel by parcel, industrially-zoned, vacant properties including the owner, gross acres, acreage lost to wetlands and steep slopes, and net acres. Comments as to the status of each property are also provided.

The report concludes that approximately 930 acres of vacant land exist in the Kent Valley and just under 2,000 acres were identified on Seattle's eastside. Based on historical absorption rates, these raw acreages suggest that less than a 10-year supply of industrial land exists.

As bleak as this sounds, the study actually paints a brighter picture than really exists. This is because the report does not attempt to estimate land rendered off limits to development due to buffer requirements by local jurisdictions and land lost resulting from the location and configuration of wetlands.

As an illustration of this, take for example, a 187 acre parcel of land located in the Kent Valley where development plans are being processed. This industrially zoned property has recently obtained a wetlands jurisdictional determination from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designating 26 acres as wetlands. After accommodating buffers, satisfying local wetland mitigation requirements, and deducting land lost due to the location and irregular configuration of the wetlands, less than 110 acres are useable. The total land area lost due to the 26 acres of wetlands is actually in excess of 77 acres.

As a response, Seattle planners are recommending redevelopment in areas such as the south Kingdome area and areas around Lake Union in the city of Seattle where little vacant industrial land exists.

Seattle has determined by reviewing tax assessors records, that properties may be underutilized and are available for

redevelopment. NAIOP supports redevelopment in these areas, but does not believe it is realistic to assume that the majority of the region's growth for the next 20 years will be housed in redevelopment projects.

Redevelopment of industrial properties is difficult for a number of factors. First, land values in these areas are extremely high, in the \$10 to \$15 per square foot range. Second, much of the ownership in these areas is fragmented requiring combining of a number of properties to accommodate a large facility. This process in itself can be very difficult.

Many of the properties in the older industrial areas are contaminated and require expensive environmental clean up. Older buildings will likely need to be demolished, existing utility systems may not be properly sized or are in the wrong location, and streets and alleys may need to be vacated to efficiently accommodate the requirements of modern industrial facilities.

What can local government do to help alleviate the shortage of industrial land supply?

First, they should integrate the wetlands and sensitive areas issue into the overall land use process. Consideration should be given to allowing low-quality wetlands that are already served with infrastructure to be made available for development. This assumes appropriate mitigation is provided.

Second, local government must strive to make the most efficient use of its industrial land supply. Existing ordinances should be reviewed and amended where contradictions are found. Requirements addressing excessive setbacks, buffers, allowable coverage, and open space should be examined.

Joint use of requirements such as truck maneuvering areas and storm water treatment facilities on adjacent lots should also be encouraged.

And lastly, NAIOP believes some process needs to be established to allow the siting of certain industrial facilities outside of the urban growth boundary.

New Publications

DCD, working in cooperation with a utilities task force, will soon have a packet available on preparing a utilities element. Representatives from utilities, state agencies, and special districts assisted in developing the utilities information.

To order the packet, call the Growth Management Division at 206-753-2222, SCAN 234-2222.

Affordable housing is fast becoming one of the most important issues for local governments in the 1990s. A guide for local policy makers by the Municipal Research and Services Center, *Affordable Housing Techniques—A Primer for Local Government Officials*, can be ordered for \$10.

To order copies of the affordable housing publication, call the Growth Management Division at 206-753-2222, SCAN 234-2222, or the Housing Division at 206-586-5882, SCAN 321-5882.

Capital facilities tops list of growth management challenges

Financing and planning for capital facilities—such as roads, transit systems, water and sewer plants, and public buildings—is the greatest challenge ahead for local governments managing growth. That finding is from DCD's *Growth Management Program Needs Assessment*, completed in December.

Other priority needs, identified by various local government client groups, were:

- Having adequate resources to achieve growth management goals;
- Resolving policy conflicts among different interests and jurisdictions;
- Building broad public support for growth management; and
- Making governmental decision-making more "customer-friendly."

Copies of the Executive Summary of the *Growth Management Program Needs Assessment* are available by calling 206-753-2222, SCAN 234-2222.

Help from state agencies

A packet of information on what state agencies would like to see in comprehensive plans will be available soon.

Developed by the Interagency Growth Management Workgroup, the packet has information from the departments of Trade and Economic Development, Social and Health Services, Health, Transportation, Ecology, Fisheries, Natural Resources, and Wildlife, and the Puget Sound Water Quality Authority and Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office.

Call Sharon Hope for details at 206-586-1239, SCAN 321-1239.

Ecology

A new publication for environmental educators, *Designing Community Environmental Education Programs—A Guide for Local Government*, is available from the state Department of Ecology.

The guide is written to help local government and others develop education programs for citizens, businesses, landowners, schools, and others.

It includes information on planning education efforts, working with the community, involving business, working with the media, and choosing appropriate education techniques. Issue specific supplements will be added later by the individual Ecology programs.

To obtain a copy, call the DOE publications office at 206-438-7472, SCAN 585-7472.

Wildlife

A new newsletter, *The Wildlife Planner*, features articles about wildlife and land use planning. Offered by the state Department of Wildlife, the purpose of the newsletter is to communicate with city and county planners, elected officials, and citizens about land use decisions affecting wildlife.

Editor Stephen Penland, growth management program manager for Wildlife, welcomes ideas and suggestions for the newsletter. Call Penland at 206-774-8812.

Combining SEPA, GMA plans

Guidance on how to consider the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act in growth management work is now available. DCD and the Department of Ecology have jointly developed a workbook to help local governments make effective and efficient choices in meeting GMA and SEPA requirements.

The GMA has changed the nature and character of planning in Washington state, and those changes also affect the role and timing of SEPA compliance for comprehensive planning. The GMA is a complex series of steps progressing from broad, general county-wide planning policies through carrying out plans by the development or protection of specific sites. SEPA can be used effectively to fit with the progression from general policies to more specific analysis.

The workbook shows that there are many opportunities for using the work required by the GMA to also meet the requirements of SEPA, and by "working" the two acts together, a superior product results.

Local governments are recognizing that the consistency requirements of the GMA may also respond to the impact analysis and mitigation requirements of SEPA. They recognize that SEPA's notification and disclosure requirements fit well with the GMA standard for early and continuous public participation. And they see that the 13 goals of the GMA can be used to structure planning alternatives to be reviewed under SEPA.

Copies of the workbook have been mailed to each county and city planning department. Additional copies are available by calling 206-753-2222, SCAN 234-2222.

Cases before state's growth planning hearings boards

Central Puget Sound

CASE NO. 92-3-0001. STATUS: DECISION ISSUED 1/5/93

James C. Tracy vs. Mercer Island; Challenged: 1) adequacy of public notice regarding SEPA review; and 2) authority of city to exceed requirements of the GMA for critical area regulations.

Critical Areas Ordinance A-96 was sent back to the city of Mercer Island to remove reference to "piped watercourses" as critical areas and to either remove reference to "public and privately owned passive open space" or to define this phrase as a critical area.

The board determined that the city's public notice regarding SEPA review was adequate. It also determined that "enhanced public participation" is required for the preparation of comprehensive plans and implementing regulations, but not for the development of interim critical areas regulations.

CASE NO. 92-3-0002. STATUS: CASE DISMISSED; PARTIES REACHED AGREEMENT ON ISSUES IN DISPUTE

Manke Lumber Co. vs. Kitsap County; designations and development regulations for resource lands.

CASE NO. 92-3-0003. STATUS: CASE DISMISSED AT REQUEST OF PETITIONER

Town of Ruston vs. Pierce County; obligations and liabilities, beyond local capacity, imposed on town by adopted county-wide planning policies.

CASE NO. 92-3-0004. STATUS: HEARING TOOK PLACE 1/13/93. DECISION EXPECTED BY 3/1/93

City of Snoqualmie vs. King County; Issues include: 1) urban growth areas as defined in adopted county-wide planning policies; 2) inadequacy of fiscal impact analysis; 3) validity and role of King County's Growth Management Planning Council; and 4) purpose and scope of county-wide planning policies.

CASE NO. 92-3-0005. STATUS: CASE DISMISSED AT REQUEST OF PETITIONER

City of Issaquah vs. King County; Challenged county-wide planning policies: 1) lack of timely EIS; 2) inadequacy of fiscal impact analysis; 3) imposition of county zoning authority over city; 4) UGA boundaries; and 5) designation of urban centers.

CASE NO. 92-3-0006. STATUS: HEARING TOOK PLACE ON 1/21/93. DECISION EXPECTED ABOUT 3/16/93

James C. Gutschmidt vs. City of Mercer Island; Issues include: 1) adequacy of SEPA notice; 2) authority of city to exceed GMA requirements for critical areas regulations; and 3) numerous constitutional issues.

CASE NO. 92-3-0009. STATUS: HEARING TOOK PLACE 1/11/93. DECISION EXPECTED BY 4/6/93

Cities of Poulsbo, Port Orchard, and Bremerton vs. Kitsap County. Issues include: 1) authority of county in county-wide planning policies to dictate method of annexation used by cities; 2) adoption of county-wide planning policies in violation of interlocal agreement and without ratification by the cities; and 3) county-wide planning policies identifying entities other than cities as appropriate providers of urban services.

Note: Cases 92-3-0007, 92-3-0008, and 92-3-0009 were consolidated into one case, 92-3-0009.

Western Washington

CASE NO. 92-02-0001. STATUS: BOARD ORDER IN FAVOR OF COUNTY

Clark County Natural Resources Council, et. al., vs. Clark County; whether county's newly adopted wetlands ordinance complies with the GMA. Now on appeal in Thurston County Superior Court.

Eastern Washington

None.

Hearings updates

For details on the status of cases or other hearings boards information, please contact the growth planning hearings boards:

Central Puget Sound Growth Planning Hearings Board

2329 One Union Square
600 University St.
Seattle, WA 98101-1129
206-389-2625

Eastern Washington Growth Planning Hearings Board

1118 Larson Building
6 South Second St.
Yakima, WA 98901
509-454-7803

Western Washington Growth Planning Hearings Board

111 W. 21st Ave., Suite No. 1,
MS 0953
Olympia, WA 98504-0953
206-664-8966

Correction

In the Winter 1993 issue of *About Growth*, an incorrect phone number was given. For copies of the procedural criteria, call 753-2222, SCAN 234-2222.

New Realities: Making the Connections

Spokane will host the Joint Spring Planning Conference on May 17, 18, and 19.

New political and environmental realities present tremendous challenge and opportunity. The "New Realities" conference will describe those changes and offer skills and insight into the kinds of connections that planners will need to succeed in this new era.

Speakers invited include Gov. Mike Lowry, Henry Cisneros, secretary of the U.S. HUD, and Connie Cooper, president of the American Planning Association.

Mark your calendars now and watch for registration announcements.

CALENDAR GROWTH MANAGEMENT

May 5-7, Madison, WI; June 7-9, Copper Mountain, CO

Effective zoning administration techniques used to enforce zoning ordinances will be studied in these two workshops. Call 608-922-4705 for information.

April 22, Washington, D.C.; April 26, San Francisco; May 6, Chicago

Environmental Regulation and Enforcement in the Clinton-Gore Administration is the topic of one-day conferences sponsored by Federal Publications Inc. For information, call 1-800-922-4330.

April 29-May 1, Kennewick

The Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Conference is "for economists by economists." Topics include Canada-U.S. economic relations, agriculture, banking, old-growth timber preservation, and more. For information, call 1-800-942-4978.

June 8-11, Yakima

Growth management will be one of the topics discussed at the Washington State Association of Counties annual convention. For details, call 206-753-1886.

June 22-25, Yakima

The annual conference of the Association of Washington Cities will include workshops on growth management, citizen involvement and other planning topics. Call 206-753-4137 for more information.

July 25, Yakima; July 22, Lynnwood

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the annual Planning and Zoning Institute sponsored by AWC and WSAC. Call AWC at 206-753-4137 or WSAC at 206-753-1886 for details.



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